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ABSTRACT

The main focus of this paper is upon the acquisition of a few specific attitudes: Whether women should work; what kinds of jobs women should hold; and whether women are intellectually curious. Views of women's work role held by ninth-grade boys and girls in Maryland are sampled with respondents drawn from seven residential areas chosen to typify segments of the U.S. population. Boys are consistently more conservative than girls. Although in general those of higher IQ hold liberal views, middle class boys of high IQ are the least liberal. Black children are less opposed than white children to having women working outside the home, but are just as conservative about having women holding men's jobs as other groups. The greatest differences between girls' and boys' views are found for middle class whites. (Author)

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THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

REPORT No. 89

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOLS

A SURVEY OF COGNITIVE STYLES IN MARYLAND NINTH GRADERS:

IV: VIEWS OF WOMEN'S ROLES

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NOVEMBER 1970

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A SURVEY OF COGNITIVE STYLE IN MARYLAND NINTH-GRADERS:

IV. VIEWS OF WOMEN'S WORK ROLE

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Baltimore, Maryland

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Role demands are often silent and subtle, especially when they are extensions of folkways and mores, as is true for woman's role in modern American society (see Sarbin and Allen, 1968). There is a surprising lack of concern in the sociological literature with the role of women in the United States until very recently. Davis (1969), after a review of what little is written on this topic, suggests that woman's role in America is "properly" that of domesticity and child rearing, with the implication that careers for women are both difficult and ill-advised. Many persons have noted that women seldom achieve eminence, even in traditionally feminine fields, and this failure has its most appealing explanation in terms of role congruence. Modern American society is intolerant of the intellectually aspiring or intellectually achieving woman, and devalues the work role of women generally. The prepotent influence of role incompatibility as an explanation for women's lack of eminence is emphasized by such findings as Milton's (1957). He notes that a sex difference in problem-solving, often viewed as the sphere of men exclusively, is abolished when problems are expressed in terms that are role-compatible. Specifically, girls' performance is better on problems which involve objects or activities traditionally considered to fall in the female domain than on problems that require exactly the same reasoning processes but mention more "male" objects.

Role theorists have shown much concern with role models and with the processes by which roles are internalized, whether by imitation, by identification, or both. There has been much less concern with the substance of roles--what specific behaviors, attitudes or value systems are acquired, or with the effect of the "audience" upon role acquisition. In the learning of a feminine role, for example, role theorists would emphasize the proximity of adult female figures (the mother, other female relatives, the teacher) in the child's life space and the psychological dynamics involved in the child's imitation of, or identification with, such figures. Another crucial factor, however, in shaping girls' attitudes about woman's role is probably the "audience"--the set of young boys they view as potential mates. There has been some emphasis lately on the learning of "what not to do" in the later stages of sex role development. Girls, according to this view, tend to learn not to engage in sexually aggressive behavior rather than learning what specific female behaviors they should display. For this kind of negatively-based learning the presence and actions of a male audience are equivalent to a set of negative role models who can invoke powerful sanctions in a way that is probably quite different from that of positive role models (mothers, teacher, etc.).

The main focus of this paper is not with global sex-role identifications but with the acquisition of a few specific attitudes or beliefs: whether women should work, what kinds of jobs women should hold, and whether women are intellectually curious. In particular, we are interested in what opinions young adolescent girls hold in these specific areas, how their opinions vary as a function of social class or residential locus, and in what ways there is congruence or incongruence between the opinions of girls and boys on these topics.

METHOD

As part of a large survey (Entwisle and Greenberger, 1970a) of ninth-grade students undertaken to elucidate relations between social class and cognitive style variables, three questions on woman's role were included. These questions were part of a large battery of tests and appeared together in the form below:

> Check one and only one answer to the statements below. Also tell how strongly you feel about the answer you check.
>
> 1. What do you think women should be like?
>
> _____ Women should do many things including being leaders in politics, the professions and business (the same work as men).
>
> _____ Women should center their lives in the home and family and their jobs should be in such fields as teaching, nursing and secretarial service (different work from men).
>
> Check how strongly you feel about your answer.
>
> (very weak) _____ 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 (strong)
>
> 2. How do you think women see the world?
>
> _____ Women are interested in things but not usually to the point of following them up seriously. Working on problems isn't what they get satisfaction from.
>
> _____ Women are curious about many things, try to learn more about these things, and get a lot of satisfaction from working on these problems.

Check how strongly you feel about your answer.

(very weak) 1 2 3 4 (strong)

3. What do you think women should do?

_____ It is not a good idea for women to work. They should devote themselves to their home and family.

_____ It is a good idea for women to work. They don't have to devote themselves only to their homes and family.

Check how strongly you feel about your answer.

(very weak) 1 2 3 4 (strong)

Each question can be scored from 1 (least favorable or least liberal) to 9 (most favorable or most liberal). For example, if a respondent chooses the first alternative in question 1, the liberal alternative, he automatically receives 5 points plus the number he checks on the intensity scale. If he chooses the second alternative in question 1, he automatically receives 5 less the number of checks on the intensity scale.

The questions on women's role were administered to a large sample of ninth-grade students in and around Baltimore Maryland in the spring of 1968. Schools were chosen to typify certain segments of American society and include inner city blacks and whites (Schools 2 and 7), blue collar blacks and whites (Schools 3 and 6),

rural whites (School 5), middle class whites (School 4), and middle class Jewish whites (School 1). In the first report of this series (Entwisle and Greenberger, 1970a), Table 1 gives the number of students by each school, sex, and IQ stratum, Table 2 gives Census data on the residential areas from which students came, and Figure 1 shows the geographical distribution of the schools. Altogether, 270 boys and 305 girls answered all the women's role questions. Only two questions were given in School 1, the school that served as a pilot study for the remainder of the survey. This school is omitted from the analyses here, so there are no data for Jewish whites.

The questions were read aloud (usually over a public address system in a large room) and testing assistants circulated among the students to offer help. Other procedures were carried out with the same students (see Entwisle and Greenberger, 1970a, for a complete list.)

RESULTS

Table 1 gives the average score for each question for each subgroup. Several variance analyses clarify trends seen in Table 1. Table 2, based on scores of average IQ children from six residential loci, shows sex to be a significant source of variance. This finding also appears strongly in Tables 3, 4, and 5. Girls are more favorably disposed than boys toward women's doing the same things as men, toward women's getting intellectual satisfaction from work, and toward women's holding jobs. The largest overall differences are noted between white girls and white boys (see "Totals" in Table 1). Total scores differ by over 7 points for high IQ white middle class boys and girls for example, and by 2 to 4 points for blacks of any group. Except for question 2 (how women see the world) boys tend to be very conservative in their views. Rural boys, for example, score almost at the negative extreme (1.45 where 1.00 is the lowest possible on whether women should do the same work as men (question 1). White rural and blue collar boys are noticeably more conservative than blacks on the issue of women's working outside the home.

There are large differences on these topics for every group, however, with the first question (on what kinds of jobs are suitable for women) eliciting the

least liberal responses. Many more respondents express views that women should work (question 3) than express the opinion that women should hold "men's" jobs.

In Table 2, both school (residential locus) and the question x school interaction are significant sources of variance. The school differences are most easily seen in the "Total" column of Table 1. The interaction is complex. Boys are slightly positive (above 5) on the second question, and all girls score close to 7. The third questions (whether or not women should work) gets very different responses by residential locus from both boys and girls. Blue collar and rural whites are conservative on this issue, while inner city blacks and whites, and blue collar blacks are considerably more positive.

The six residential loci include inner city blacks, inner city whites, blue collar blacks, and blue collar whites. Analysis of these four groups by themselves allows variance attributable to race and to social class to be extracted separately (Table 3). In addition to borderline ($p = .07$) statistical significance for race and for social class, there are significant interactions between question, race, and social class ($p < .01$) and between question and social class ($p < .05$). The simplest way to comprehend these interactions is to look at Figure 1. The most noticeable component is that white youngsters of blue collar origin are much less favorable toward women working outside the home (question 3) than inner city whites or blacks of

either group. A less pronounced component is that blacks are more favorable than whites toward women holding "male" jobs (question 1). All groups are just about equivalent on question 2, women's curiosity about the world.

In Table 4 blacks of two IQ levels and two social class levels can be studied in a factorial arrangement. IQ does not account for significant variance, and the only significant effects are between sexes (girls higher) and between questions (most conservative on women holding "men's" jobs).

The influence of IQ can be studied in another comparison between medium and high IQ white students of blue collar, rural, and middle class schools. Here a number of interactions involving IQ are significant, as well as the main effect of IQ. The pattern of the questions x sex x IQ x school interaction is complex and best seen in Figure 2. With the exception of middle class boys, IQ and liberal attitudes toward women are positively associated. The most striking comparison involves the disparity between views of middle class high IQ girls and boys on whether women should work outside the home (question 3).

Relations of Women's Role Questions to School Performance.

Table 6 gives correlations between answers to the three questions on women's role and school performance in four major subjects. Of 126 correlations for boys,

7 are significant at or beyond the 5 percent level. This is what would be expected according to chance. Of 126 correlations for girls, 5 are significant at or beyond the 5 percent level, also what would be expected by chance.

When groups are combined, however, some more interesting relationships emerge. For white boys of blue collar, rural and middle class origins (N=147) there are no significant correlations between answers to any one of the three questions and grades. For girls, on the other hand, 8 of the 12 correlations are significant beyond the .01 level and are positive. For question 1 the correlations with grades in science, social studies, and English are .29, .25 and .27. For question 2, the correlation with English is .27. For question 3 the correlations with science, mathematics, social studies and English are .24, .24, .22, and .29 respectively. These correlations are not large by some standards but their consistency is impressive. For low IQ inner city girls only one out of 12 correlations is significant, and for low IQ inner city boys, none is significant. It thus appears that opinions on women's role are relevant to school performance of white girls but not of black girls.

DISCUSSION

The divisions and ascription of statuses according to sex is a basic component in all social systems. A very fundamental human motive, often bypassed when motives to attain external goals are emphasized, is the desire to make one's behavior conform to a previously acquired standard (such sex-typed behaviors as aggressiveness for boys and dependency-passivity-conformity for girls). The motive to match behavior to a standard is a particularly cogent one for adolescent girls.

As noted earlier, there is a marked difference in opinion between boys and girls about women's role, with boys consistently holding more conservative opinions. Some general trends are seen if subgroup differences are temporarily ignored. Both sexes are decidedly on the negative side for question 1 (women holding men's jobs), with boys about 1 scale point lower than girls. Both sexes are on the positive side for question 2 (how women see the world), with boys slightly positive and girls about 1.5 points higher. On the third question (whether women should work) girls are positive, boys are negative, and almost 2 points separate them.

As a group, black boys are more liberal in their attitudes toward women than whites, but this stems from their willingness for women to work rather than from their willingness for women to hold men's jobs. Surprisingly,

the most liberal views on women's holding men's jobs are expressed by high IQ blue collar white students. Middle class white girls are close to the midpoint on women's holding men's jobs, but high IQ middle class boys are almost two points lower. It appears, then, that for those girls most able to be upwardly mobile occupationally (high IQ white) there is negative peer-group pressure by males. As this question was expressed, the jobs are "leaders in politics, the professions, and business," the presumed vocational targets of the high IQ white middle class males. Blue collar boys express a slightly more liberal view toward women's holding "men's" jobs, but perhaps this is because the jobs listed are somewhat unrealistic in terms of the vocational aspirations of blue collar students. Thus to imagine a woman's holding such a job may not be personally threatening, nor even be conceived in terms of their own girl classmates' holding such jobs.

The differences in sex-role orientation by social class so frequently cited, blue collar being more conservative than middle class, are seen in the present data more for girls than for boys. Girls from the various residential groups are very different--blue collar girls have views close to the views of their male classmates. The middle class girls, on the other hand, hold the most favorable views toward women working of any group of girls, and this view is markedly discrepant (3.67 points) from that of their male classmates.

The favorable attitudes of blacks towards women's holding jobs may be a direct consequence of their being socialized in families with female heads, or in families where two wage-earners are required to achieve subsistence. It should be emphasized again that work expectations are not coupled with a desire to see women in positions of leadership, even though blacks generally are a little more favorable toward this idea than whites.

Having higher intelligence apparently exerts considerable influence on girls, especially for middle class girls' approval of work outside the home (question 3). The differences in opinion associated with IQ seem smaller for boys, and are even reversed for middle class boys (n=19). By far the most interesting discrepancy is that between high IQ middle class boys' and girls' views concerning women working outside the home, although it should be emphasized that the sample size is small. At ninth-grade, at least, there exists a strong difference in opinion that may have serious consequences later in life. Those girls with the most potential and desire for outside work have potential mates who are the most opposed to it.

Grade Prediction

It is not surprising that girls' views toward women's role correlate with school grades. Apparently girls who believe women should hold positions of leadership

and that women should work outside the home are achieving higher grades than their classmates who see work as less relevant. It is as though they are consciously preparing themselves for work roles.

Not all girls' grades are correlated with liberal views toward women working; however, the girls who are least likely to hold jobs where academic preparation is necessary (blacks and those of lower IQ) are the ones for whom the relationship does not exist. One implication is that academic school work is probably not seen as relevant to occupational roles by the less able or less privileged girls. Unfortunately, grades for these girls in vocational subjects (typing, home economics) are not available.

The development of young people in terms of occupational roles is one of the least studied aspects of the entire socialization process. Borow (1966) suggests that this is because occupational phenomena have been examined mostly when they are explicit and within the formal setting of work itself--the overt choice of an occupation or overt performance on a job by adults. Social patterns now formally exclude youth from early labor force participation. Younger persons are not studied, then, because it is impossible to study them in the institutional context of work. The lack of research, however, does not mean that occupational developments are not occurring or that they are unimportant.

By ninth grade most youngsters have begun to consider the ability and training prerequisite for jobs, even though the compelling realities of the outside world are not necessarily acknowledged. It is just about at this age, then, that one might expect sex differences toward women's role to emerge.

The present data suggest that the occupational aspirations of females may be subject to considerable shaping by peer-group pressure. One wonders what the longitudinal course of these pressures may be. At what age are they first apparent? At later ages are the differences of opinion between the sexes smaller or larger? Some evidence (Stein and Smithells, 1969) suggests that differences continue to increase as age increases.

Some of the issues raised here are important for education. In many respects, the educational system through college pretends to prepare males and females for the same occupational roles, but these roles are not scripted in the society at large. Many have noted that the educational system is, in this sense, not functionally attuned to the needs of society (see, e.g., Komarovsky, 1946). The issues are far too numerous and complex even to raise in a small paper of this kind, but the data suggest that present socialization practices are leading to large differences in male's and female's conceptions of female work roles.

Table 1. Mean Scores by Subgroups for Woman's Role Questions[a]

Type School	Race	IQ Level	Boys n	Boys Ques 1	Boys Ques 2	Boys Ques 3	Girls n	Girls Ques 1	Girls Ques 2	Girls Ques 3	Total Boys	Total Girls
Inner City	Black	LoIQ	30	1.47	6.53	4.43	30	2.33	6.83	6.00	12.43	15.16
		MedIQ	28	2.43	6.00	4.25	39	3.74	7.03	5.97	12.68	16.74
	White	MedIQ	16	1.69	5.94	3.94	16	2.94	6.94	6.37	11.57	16.25
Blue Collar	Black	LoIQ	22	1.86	6.00	3.82	22	2.41	7.14	6.73	11.68	16.28
		MedIQ	26	2.54	5.62	4.58	30	2.50	7.03	5.40	12.74	14.93
	White	MedIQ	30	2.10	5.37	2.50	30	2.30	7.40	2.80	9.97	12.50
		HiIQ	19	3.05	5.32	2.84	30	4.83	7.60	6.17	11.21	18.60
Rural	White	MedIQ	29	1.45	5.24	2.17	28	2.14	6.36	4.29	8.86	12.79
		HiIQ	20	2.40	5.20	4.90	30	3.97	7.77	6.10	12.50	17.84
Middle Class	White	MedIQ	20	2.45	5.85	3.70	20	4.05	6.45	4.15	12.00	14.65
		HiIQ	30	2.23	4.90	3.73	30	4.17	6.63	6.90	10.36	17.70

a "Average IQ" students have IQ's (mostly CTMM) in the range 95 to 114 or SCAT scores between 39th and 60th percentile on national norms.
"Low IQ" students have IQ's in the range 70-85.
"High IQ" students have IQ's in the range 128-up or SCAT scores above the 92nd percentile on national norms.

Table 2. Variance Analysis for Three Questions on Woman's Role. Six Schools; Medium IQ.

Source of Variation	d.f.	Mean Square	F-value
Between Persons			
School	5	47.60	4.76**
Sex	1	271.00	27.13**
School x Sex	5	4.00	---
Persons Within School-Sex Groups	300	9.99	
Within Persons			
Question	2	102.30	139.94**
School x Question	10	17.70	2.42**
Sex x Question	2	4.50	---
School x Sex x Question	10	7.10	---
Persons x Q Within School-Sex Groups	600	7.31	

** $P(F) < .01$

Table 3. Variance Analysis for Three Questions on Woman's Role. Black vs. White; Inner City vs. Blue Collar; Medium IQ.

Source of Variation	d.f.	Mean Square	F-value
Between Persons			
Sex	1	217.00	18.80**
Race (Black vs. White)	1	37.00	3.21[a]
Social Class (Inner City vs. Blue Collar)	1	39.00	3.38[a]
Sex x Race	1	1.00	---
Sex x Social Class	1	23.00	1.99
Race x Social Class	1	22.00	1.91
Sex x Race x Social Class	1	1.00	---
Within Sex-Race-Social Class Groups	210	11.54	
Within Persons			
Questions	2	657.00	86.79**
Questions x Sex	2	10.50	1.39
Questions x Race	2	9.50	1.25
Questions x Social Class	2	27.50	3.63*
Q x Sex x Race	2	2.00	---
Q x Sex x Social Class	2	16.00	2.11
Q x Race x Social Class	2	36.00	4.76**
Q x Sex x Race x Social Class	2	7.00	---
Q x Within Sex-Race-Social Class Groups	420	7.57	

[a] $P(F) = .07$

* $P(F) < .05$

** $P(F) < .01$

Table 4. Variance Analysis for Three Questions on Woman's Role. Black Inner City vs. Black Blue Collar; Low vs. Medium IQ.

Source of Variation	d.f.	Mean Square	F-value
Between Persons			
IQ	1	2.0	---
Sex	1	205.0	20.38**
Social Class	1	1.0	---
IQ x Sex	1	2.0	---
IQ x Social Class	1	4.0	---
Sex x Social Class	1	0.0	---
IQ x Sex x Social Class	1	14.0	1.39
Residual between persons	219	10.06	
Within Persons			
Questions	2	961.5	115.28**
Questions x IQ	2	19.0	2.28[a]
Questions x Sex	2	15.5	1.86
Questions x Social Class	2	1.0	---
Q x IQ x Sex	2	9.0	1.08
Q x Sex x Social Class	2	2.5	---
Q x IQ x Social Class	2	8.0	---
Q x IQ x Sex x Social Class	2	2.0	---
Residual within persons	438	8.34	

[a] $p = .10$

** $P(F) < .01$

Table 5. Variance Analysis for Three Questions on Woman's Role. Blue Collar, Rural, Middle Class; High vs. Medium IQ.

Source of Variation	d.f.	Mean Square	F-value
Between Persons			
Sex	1	591.0	63.69**
IQ	1	217.0	23.38**
School	2	4.5	---
Sex x IQ	1	84.0	9.05**
Sex x School	2	0.5	---
IQ x School	2	31.5	3.39*
Sex x IQ x School	2	9.0	---
Within Sex-IQ-School Groups	304	9.28	
Within Persons			
Questions	2	831.5	128.72**
Questions x Sex	2	7.0	1.11
Questions x IQ	2	51.5	8.15**
Questions x School	4	19.1	3.04*
Q x Sex x IQ	2	5.0	---
Q x Sex x School	4	5.75	---
Q x IQ x School	4	3.25	---
Q x Sex x IQ x School	4	15.25	2.41*
Q x Within Sex-IQ-School Groups	608	6.32	

* P(F) $<$ .05

** P(F) $<$ .01

Table 6a. Boys. Correlations Between Women's Role Questions and School Performance.

				English and Question			Social Studies and Question			Mathematics and Question			Science and Question		
			n	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Inner City	Black	Lo	30	.21	-.13	-.05	.27	-.10	.09	.16	-.29	-.05	.17	.09	-.27
		Med	30	.11	.11	.17	.13	-.03	.32	----------a----------					
	White	Med	16	-.15	-.08	.12	-.01	-.25	-.14	.26	.07	.09	.45	.21	.33
Blue Collar	Black	Lo	23	.00	-.07	.18	-.23	-.18	109	-.10	.05	.03	-.14	-.05	.02
		Med	26	.11	.21	.46*	.06	.04	.31	.38	.10	.32	.11	.36	.45*
	White	Med	30	.10	-.03	-.13	.24	.13	.10	-.01	-.16	-.09	.14	-.09	-.07
		Hi	19	.02	.10	-.01	-.03	.11	-.15	-.12	.21	.19	-.22	.15	-.13
Rural	White	Med	29	.09	-.14	.19	-.11	-.35	-.03	.14	-.27	.01	.09	-.41*	.03
		Hi	30	.26	.60*	-.17	.32	.25	-.13	.39*	.42*	-.12	-.07	-.02	-.15
Middle Class	White	Med	22	-.26	-.07	.23	.30	-.15	.49*	-.15	.18	-.04	-.43*	.04	-.11
		Hi	30	.18	-.13	.01	.10	-.02	.03	.08	.01	-.02	.34	-.13	.11

[a] Not available
* Significant at 5 percent level, two-sided.

Table 6b. Girls. Correlations Between Women's Role Questions and School Performance.

				English and Question			Social Studies and Question			Mathematics and Question			Science and Question		
			n	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Inner City	Black	Lo	30	.06	.01	-.05	.09	-.10	.01	-.11	.04	.05	.17	.00	.12
		Med	41	-.05	-.07	-.05	-.25	.14	.02	----------a----------					
	White	Med	16	.45	-.19	-.22	.28	-.25	-.37	.28	-.21	-.24	.13	-.40	-.10
Blue Collar	Black	Lo	22	-.03	.05	-.06	.20	.01	.12	-.13	.12	-.15	.23	-.18	-.11
		Med	30	.12	-.12	-.22	-.03	.05	-.27	.04	-.14	-.14	.30	.01	-.19
	White	Med	30	.45*	.22	.23	.12	-.05	-.19	-.11	-.45*	-.17	.25	-.01	.00
		Hi	30	.20	.52*	.11	-.25	.46*	-.16	-.07	.44*	-.12	-.02	.30	.07
Rural	White	Med	29	.25	.36	.13	.42*	-.05	.02	.14	-.01	.18	.34	.17	.04
		Hi	30	-.10	.00	-.10	.04	-.08	.25	-.25	-.05	-.07	-.05	-.32	-.07
Middle Class	White	Med	20	.20	.11	-.12	.02	.37	.01	.03	.42	.23	.25	.07	.05
		Hi	30	-.15	-.02	-.24	.24	.04	-.06	.15	.28	.20	.17	.20	-.15

[a]Not available
* Significant at 5 percent level, two-sided.

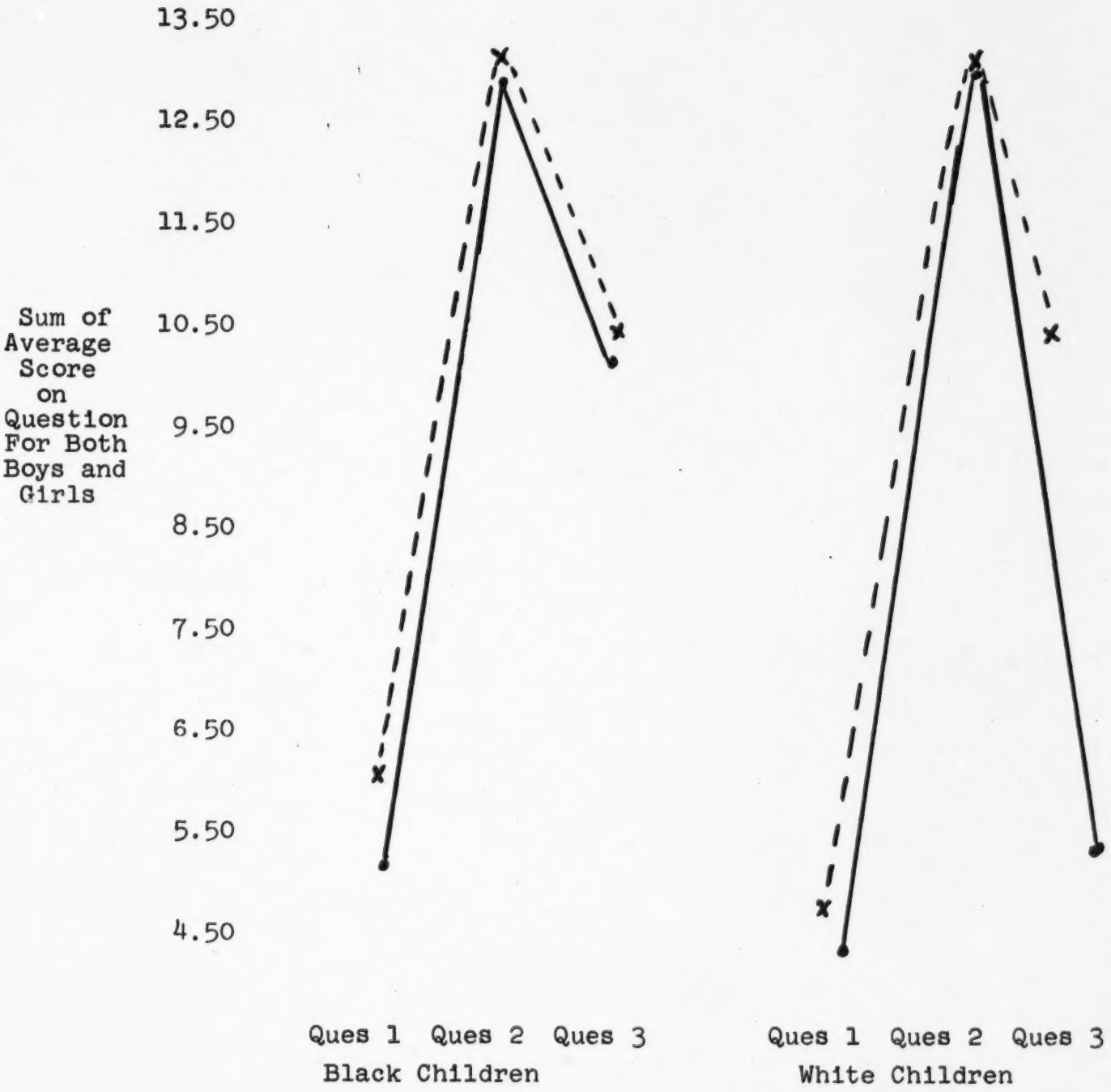

Fig. 1 Interactions between Race, and Question Topic (Sums for boys and girls) for Ninth-Graders from Inner City or Blue Collar Homes.

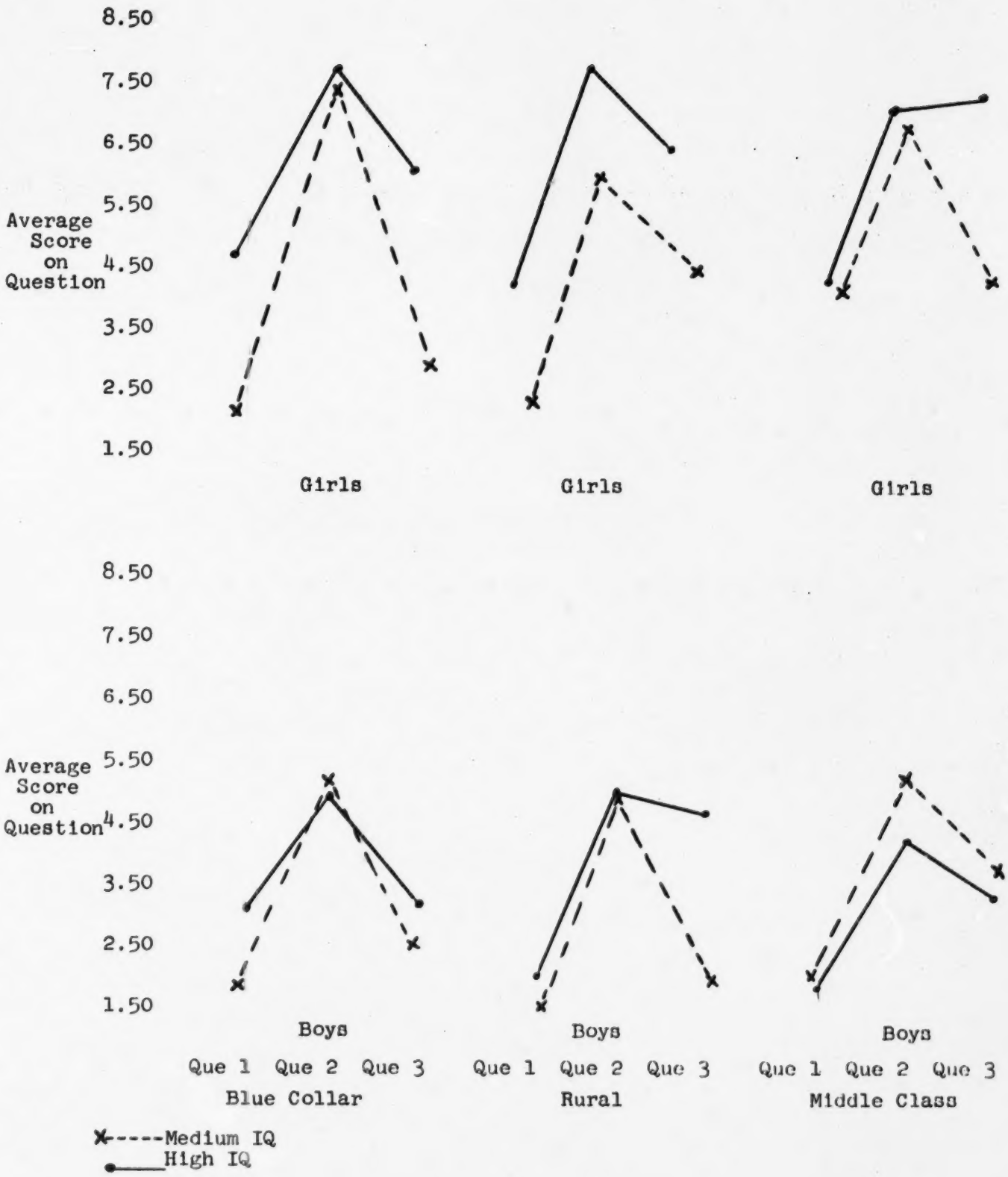

Fig. 2. Interactions between Question, Residential Locus, IQ and Sex for White Ninth-Graders of Medium or High IQ. (Table 5)

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